

## **DRUG ABUSE POD NOTES**

DAPA NOTE. Marijuana can have devastating effects on individuals: stunting emotional and intellectual skill growth, instilling a feeling of apathy, and compromising health. Marijuana users expose themselves to a drug culture that encourages experimentation with other drugs. For information on the Navy's drug and alcohol policies and programs, please contact your Command DAPA.

DAPA NOTE. In a study conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, a moderate dose of marijuana alone was shown to impair driving performance; however, the effects of even a low dose of marijuana combined with alcohol were markedly greater than for either drug alone.

DAPA NOTE. Drinking too much water after taking ecstasy can be lethal according to "New Science, Nov 01". After people have taken ecstasy, their blood contains unusually high concentrations of vasopressin. As levels of this hormone increase, the body retains more water diluting the sodium and other salts in the blood. This can swell the brain causing damage to the brain and nerve tissue.

DAPA NOTE. If you find yourself in a situation where you have to make a conscious decision about using drugs remember this last year over 4,500 Sailors found themselves in that same situation and they made the wrong choice.

DAPA NOTE. If a Sailor receives an "other than honorable" discharged due to drug abuse, you could lose *all* of your education benefits. This includes your Montgomery G.I. Bill and Federal College Fund benefits. If you apply for student aid, the Department of Education must verify you have not been convicted of a drug-related offense. Only an Honorable Discharge guarantees you all the benefits due a Veteran.

### DAPA NOTE: Part One, Inhalant Use/Awareness:

Inhalants are chemical substances that provide mind-altering effects when sniffed or inhaled. This category includes, but is not limited to:

- Solvents such as glue, correction fluid, nail polish remover, gasoline, and paint thinner
- Aerosols such as hair spray, whipped cream canisters, computer cleaner, spray paint, and air conditioning coolants like Freon
- Medical anesthetic gases such as ether, chloroform, and nitrous oxide
- Nitrites flammable liquids that are highly volatile and often sweet smelling.

There are various methods of using inhalants, depending on the particular inhalant: markers are sniffed, plastic bags are used with gasoline and computer cleaners are usually inhaled through a straw.

### DAPA NOTE: Part Two, Inhalant Use/Awareness:

Short term dangers associated with inhalants include:

Most inhalants produce a drunken, light-headed "high" that is typically short lived (15-20 seconds). Inhalants make the heart race, disturb the rhythm of the heart, and deprive the body of oxygen. "Sudden Sniffing Death Syndrome" is caused in 2 ways: the inhalant can force the heart to beat rapidly and erratically until the user goes into cardiac arrest or the fumes from the inhalant enters users the lungs and nervous system. By lowering the oxygen levels enough, the user is unable to breathe and suffocates.

### DAPA NOTE: Part Three, Inhalant Use/Awareness:

Long term dangers include:

- Personality changes
- Learning disabilities
- Memory loss
- Slurred speech
- Vision problems
- Nerve damage causing numbness or paralysis in the arms or legs
- Hearing loss

- Liver damage
- Lung damage
- Reduced muscle tone
- Damage to bone marrow

DAPA NOTE: Part Three, Inhalant Use/Awareness:

The most common group of people using inhalants are adolescents and college age teens.

Signs of inhalant use include:

- Sitting with a pen or marker near the nose
- Unusual chemical odor in the room, on the clothing or on the body
- Constant smelling of sleeves or wiping the nose with the sleeve
- Uncharacteristic nose bleeds
- Marks around the nose or mouth
- Red or runny nose or eyes
- Nausea and/or loss of appetite
- Slurred or disorganized speech
- General disorientation (a drunken or dizzy appearance)
- Lack of coordination and staggering

A psychological dependence can arise from inhalant use, but physical dependence is unlikely

DAPA NOTE. It is extremely dangerous to mix barbiturates and alcohol. What would be a non-dangerous dosage of either drug by itself, can interact in the body to the point of coma or fatal respiratory arrest. Alcohol is a central nervous system (CNS) depressant. Other medications may also depress CNS functions. When two depressant drugs are present simultaneously, their combined effects may often be far greater than would be expected with the sum of the two. This is called the 'synergistic effect' or additive effect. Remember if you are on medications adhere to the warning labels, they are there for a reason!

DAPA NOTE. Import, export, possession, use, or manufacture of products containing designer drug analogues is prohibited per SECNAVINST 5300.28. The potency and effects of these drugs vary from person to person and from batch to batch, even from the same manufacturer, so a drug user is never certain of the outcome of each use. They are literally risking it all with each use.

DAPA NOTE. Prescription drug abuse is one of our fastest growing health threats. Prescribed medications are to be used only by the named user on their container, in their prescribed dosage, for their written purpose and during their prescribed period. Members shall not share, sell, buy or otherwise obtain prescription drugs anywhere but their health care provider.

DAPA NOTE. Exercise supplements obtained through legitimate retailers in the U.S. will not cause a member to fail a urinalysis. Members should consult their supplement use and their interaction with other prescription drugs they are taking with their health care provider.